REMARKS

Summary of Claim Status

Claims 1-9 are pending in the present application after entry of the present amendment. Claim 2 is rejected for the reasons discussed below. Claims 4, 6, 7, and 9 are objected to for informalities. Claims 1 and 3-9 are allowed. Applicant thanks the Examiner for this acknowledgement of patentable subject matter.

Applicant respectfully requests the favorable reconsideration of the claims and withdrawal of the pending rejections and objections in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion.

Objections

Claims 4, 6, 7, and 9 are objected to because of informalities. Applicant thanks the Examiner for his close reading of the claims.

With respect to Claims 4, 6, and 7, the Examiner stated "the phrase 'paragraph (1)(a)' should be referred to as 'claim 1, step a.' Applicant has amended Claims 4, 6, and 7 in the manner suggested by the Examiner to correct this minor informality. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

With respect to Claim 9, the Examiner stated "the method of claim 9 is a method of measuring signal skew, however, there is no measuring done on the body of the claim." Applicant has amended Claim 9 merely to clarify the language and Applicant believes amended Claim 9 overcomes the objection. Claim 9, as amended, recites a "method of determining signal skew." Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

With respect to Claim 9, the Examiner further stated "the second plurality of programmable logic blocks are said to be connectable to the second destination branch, and later in the claim the first destination branch is connected to the second logic block." Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's reading of the claim. Claim 9 recites "connecting the first destination branch to the input terminal of the second logic block" at step (b)(i). Claim 9 also recites "connecting the output terminal of the first logic block to the input terminal of a second one of the first plurality of logic

blocks" at step (a)(ii). Thus, the "second logic block" referred to in step (b)(i) is one of the first plurality of logic blocks, which is recited in Claim 9 as being programmably connectable to the first destination branch. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

With respect to Claim 2, the Examiner stated "'the one of the second plurality of logic blocks [in the first oscillator]' and the 'the [second] one of the second plurality of logic blocks [in the second oscillator' are claimed to be the same even though they are part of different oscillators." Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 2 as originally presented is not indefinite. The specification as filed illustrates the features claimed in Claim 2. For example, Figures 2A and 2B respectively show first and second oscillators where the one of the second plurality of logic blocks in the first oscillator, logic block R24C37 in Figure 2A, is the same as the second one of the second plurality of logic blocks in the second oscillator, logic block R24C37 in Figure 2B. Thus the two oscillators, which may be separately instantiated in a programmable logic device by first and second programming sequences, both include the same logic block R24C37. This is confirmed in the corresponding description in the text of the specification. For example, as noted in paragraph [0024], the dashed portions of Figures 2A and 2B may be identical structures, thereby leading to identical delay contributions. Figures 3 and 4 further illustrate examples of the feature.
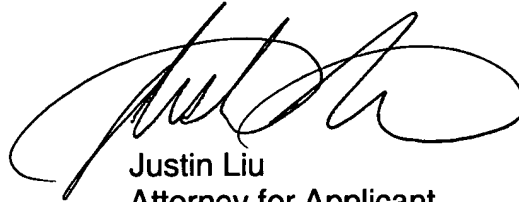
Thus, Applicant believes Claim 2 is not indefinite and does particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. In particular, Claim 2 recites that the one of the second plurality of logic blocks in the first oscillator and the second one of the second plurality of logic block in the second oscillator are the same logic block, as supported by the specification as filed.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the present rejection and allowance of Claim 2.

Conclusion

No new matter has been introduced by any of the above amendments. In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant believes that Claims 1-9 are in condition for allowance, and allowance of the application is therefore requested. If action other than allowance is contemplated, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone Applicant's attorney, Justin Liu, at 408-879-4641.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. BOX 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on October 22, 2004.

Julie Matthews
Name   Signature

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